

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

**RIVER HERITAGE HOTEL
WILSON DAM RESERVATION
LAUDERDALE COUNTY, ALABAMA**

**PUBLIC PARK AUTHORITY OF THE SHOALS
REQUEST FOR A PERMANENT EASEMENT OVER
APPROXIMATELY 12 ACRES
TO CONSTRUCT A 125- to 200-ROOM HOTEL AND RELATED FACILITIES**

**TENNESSEE VALLEY AUTHORITY
PICKWICK WATERSHED TEAM**

**COOPERATING AGENCY
PUBLIC PARK AUTHORITY OF THE SHOALS**

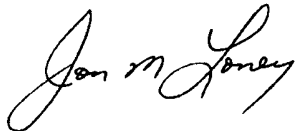
MAY 2002

May 7, 2002

Bridgette K. Ellis, NRB 2A-N

RIVER HERITAGE HOTEL - PROPOSED RECREATIONAL EASEMENT FOR PUBLIC PARK
AUTHORITY OF THE SHOALS (PPA) AND CHANGE IN LAND ALLOCATION FOR
APPROXIMATELY 12 ACRES OF WILSON DAM RESERVATION LANDS, LAUDERDALE
COUNTY, ALABAMA - FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT (FONSI)

In accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and TVA's implementing procedures, Environmental Policy and Planning is issuing the attached FONSI. This serves as documentation of TVA's environmental review. As stated in the FONSI, we conclude that the proposed action will not have a significant impact on the quality of the environment. This FONSI is contingent upon successful implementation of the attached commitments.



Jon M. Loney, Manager
NEPA Administration
Environmental Policy and Planning

HMD:TMH

Attachments (with copy of FONSI and EA)

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K. J. Jackson, WT 11A-K
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Prepared by Harold M. Draper (EP&P); with concurrence from Khurshid K. Mehta (OGC)

FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT (FONSI)

RIVER HERITAGE HOTEL PERMANENT EASEMENT AND CHANGE IN LAND ALLOCATION FOR 12 ACRES OF WILSON DAM RESERVATION LANDS LAUDERDALE COUNTY, ALABAMA

Background

TVA proposes to grant a permanent easement to the Public Park Authority of the Shoals (PPA) over approximately 12 acres of TVA Wilson Dam Reservation lands. If the easement were granted, PPA intends to construct a hotel and related facilities. The hotel was first proposed to TVA in December 2001 as part of a larger community project to develop TVA Wilson Dam and Muscle Shoals Reservation lands as a unit on the Robert Trent Jones Golf Trail, a project of the Retirement Systems of Alabama. TVA informed the public and agencies of the hotel project through a notice in the Federal Register on January 25, 2002, through public meetings in the Shoals area on February 11 and 12, 2002, and by direct notification of environmental agencies. Few comments were received expressing concerns about the proposed hotel. However, during the course of the review, site-specific environmental concerns were identified with the land requested for the golf course, and the Shoals area withdrew its request. On April 26, 2002, PPA resubmitted a request for just the hotel portion of the development. Having already conducted a large portion of the environmental impact assessment work in evaluating the previous proposal that covered both the golf course and the hotel, and having provided extensive opportunities for public and agency comments on that larger project, TVA finalized the Environmental Assessment (EA) for the newly proposed hotel project on May 6, 2002.

Alternatives and Impact Assessment

The EA evaluates the potential environmental impacts of two alternatives. Under No Action, the easement would not be granted and the 12 acres under consideration for the hotel would remain in their current allocations, as designated by the Muscle Shoals/Wilson Land Use Plan of 1996. The current allocations are Development Opportunities, Visual Protection, and Public Recreation and Open Space. TVA would continue to manage the land for public recreation and open space uses. No additional impacts to environmental resources would be expected under No Action.

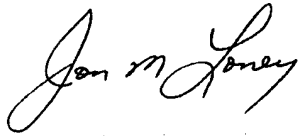
Under the Proposed Action, TVA would grant a permanent easement to the PPA. In addition, the Development Opportunities allocation in the Muscle Shoals/Wilson Dam Reservations Land Use Plan of 1996 would be expanded to include all of the lands requested for the hotel. If the easement were granted, it is expected that PPA, in conjunction with RSA, would construct a 125 to 200-room hotel adjacent to the Renaissance Tower and Florence Conference Center, which are on non-federal lands adjacent to the Wilson Dam Reservation. Impacts of the hotel on recreation would be beneficial, and the project would economically benefit the region. With the implementation of mitigation measures (measures 6 through 8) identified in the attached EA, potential impacts on water quality, navigation, transportation, and community noise were judged to be insignificant. No archaeological resources eligible for the National Register of Historic Places were found on the easement area.

The proposed hotel would be on the high point of a knoll overlooking Wilson Dam National Historic Landmark (NHL). Upon evaluation of the visual impacts of the hotel project on the NHL, TVA concludes that there would be no adverse effect on Wilson Dam NHL provided that the applicant implements Measures 1 through 5 in the applicant mitigation measures list and

TVA implements Measures 1 and 2 of the TVA mitigation measures list in the attached EA. By letter of May 3, 2002, the Alabama State Historic Preservation Officer concurred with this finding.

Conclusion and Findings

Based on the EA, we conclude that approval of a permanent easement over 12 acres of the Wilson Dam Reservation would not be a major Federal action significantly affecting the environment. Accordingly, an environmental impact statement is not required. This FONSI is contingent upon adherence to the 10 mitigation measures listed in the attached EA.



Jon M. Loney, Manager
NEPA Administration
Environmental Policy and Planning
Tennessee Valley Authority

May 7, 2002

Date

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ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

The Proposed Decision

TVA proposes to grant a permanent easement over approximately 12 acres of TVA land on the Wilson Dam Reservation to the Public Park Authority of the Shoals (PPA), which is governed by the Mayors of the Cities of Florence, Muscle Shoals, Sheffield, and Tuscumbia and the Chairman of Colbert and Lauderdale County Commissions. In addition, TVA would reallocate the requested land currently as allocated for Visual Protection, and Public Recreation and Open Space in the Muscle Shoals/Wilson Dam Reservation Land Use Plan to Developed Recreation (consistent with the "Developed Opportunities" defined in the 1996 Land Use Plan). PPA proposes to construct a 125 - 200 room hotel on this property which would be adjacent to and integrated with the existing Florence Conference Center and Renaissance Tower Complex.

Background

TVA acquired the Muscle Shoals and Wilson Dam reservation properties, consisting of about 3,036 acres, from the U.S. War Department in 1933. During the past few years, TVA has received a variety of proposals for development and use of the two reservation properties by non-federal entities. Local governments have been interested in promoting regional economic development and have provided TVA with several conceptual plans for evaluation. In 1996, TVA completed a land plan to identify portions of the two reservations that could be made available to others to meet non-TVA needs. At that time, TVA decided that it would reserve the majority of the property for TVA use, but would make available limited property for regional development. TVA subsequently provided a site for construction of a chamber of commerce headquarters for the region on the Wilson Dam Reservation within the boundaries of the 12 acres currently proposed for the hotel development.

In December 2001, Retirement System of Alabama (RSA) proposed to partially fund construction of a five star hotel and 36-hole golf course, to be part of the Robert Trent Jones Golf Trail. The existing Florence Conference Center and Renaissance Tower were proposed to be blended into the overall project in addition to an existing city park, built on TVA public land, known as Florence Veterans Park. Veterans Park, which is currently used for dispersed day uses (softball fields, tennis courts, picnic areas) and a recreation vehicle (RV) campground, was proposed to be upgraded to a zoo, water theme park, marina, or other improvements within two years after the completion of the start of the hotel construction. Under the terms of the easement to the City of Florence for Veterans Park, TVA approval would be needed for the proposed Veterans Park improvements. The cities of Florence, Muscle Shoals, Sheffield, and Tuscumbia and the county commissions of Colbert and Lauderdale counties (henceforth called the Shoals Area), in partnership with the RSA requested that TVA grant a permanent easement over approximately 960 acres of TVA Muscle Shoals and Wilson Dam Reservation land

for the golf course, room hotel, and public road right-of-way. The hotel was proposed on the site previously provided to the Shoals Chamber of Commerce under the 1996 plan; however, approximately 12 additional acres would be needed for the hotel project. In January 2002, the Chamber of Commerce offered abandonment of the easement in order for the proposed hotel development to proceed. TVA published a Notice of Intent to prepare an EA or EIS on the hotel and golf course project in the Federal Register on January 25, 2002. During the 30-day public scoping period, public meetings were held to inform the public of the project and to solicit comments on February 11 and 12, 2002. TVA invited other agencies to comment on this proposal (see Attachment 4). Most of the public comments received concerned the potential impacts of the golf course facility on the south side of the river in Colbert County. Few comments were received expressing concerns about the proposed hotel. In addition, during the course of the review, site-specific environmental concerns were identified with the land requested for the golf course. Subsequently, the Shoals Area withdrew its request for development of a golf course on TVA land on April 19, 2002.

On April 26, 2002, the Public Park Authority of the Shoals submitted a new request to TVA to grant a permanent easement for approximately 12 acres of TVA Wilson Dam Reservation land for construction of a 125 - 200 room hotel. The proposed hotel is expected to increase tourism, support businesses and facilitate the increased use of the existing Renaissance Tower and the Florence Conference Center. With the withdrawal of the Shoals Area's earlier request, no golf course will be built on TVA land. A golf course is now proposed on private land, and could be built whether or not a hotel is constructed on TVA land. Further, no proposed plans or improvements have been submitted to TVA at this time for Veterans Park. Accordingly, federal control and responsibility extends only to TVA's proposed approval of the approximate 12-acre tract for construction of the hotel.

Purpose and Need for TVA's Action

PPA has requested the use of TVA land for a hotel to complement the Florence Conference Center and Renaissance Tower Complex. TVA Board approval is needed to reallocate this land for Developed Recreation and for granting a permanent easement in order to allow development of the hotel project at this site. The TVA land is desired by the applicant because of its proximity to Highway 133, and also because its proximity to the existing Renaissance Tower and Florence Conference Center would allow direct access to these facilities. This site is also desirable because it is a cost efficient site for construction.

The decision before TVA is whether or not to approve the proposed permanent easement and modify the Muscle Shoals/Wilson Dam Reservation Land Use Plan so that the construction of the proposed hotel can proceed. The purpose of this Environmental Assessment (EA) is to assess the environmental impacts of the proposed action.

Alternatives

Proposed action— The proposed action is to reallocate the requested TVA land for Developed Recreation and to grant a permanent easement to the Public Park Authority of the Shoals (see Attachment 1 Location Map). Developed Recreation is defined as all reservoir land managed for concentrated, active recreation activities that require capital improvement and maintenance. Types of development that can occur on this land (in addition to a hotel) are: Commercial recreation (e.g., marinas, boat docks, resorts, campgrounds, and golf courses); public recreation (e.g., local, state and federal parks, and recreation areas); greenways (e.g., linear parks located along natural features such as lakes or ridges, or along man-made features including abandoned railroad or utility rights-of-way, which link people and resources together); and water access sites.

Architectural renditions of the structure profile and site plan for the hotel are attached (see Attachments 2 and 3). Proposed activities on the southern portion of the requested land include enhancements to the existing recreation facilities to include minor landscaping improvements. As part of the master plan, the design intent is to maintain the existing pavilion area and not make any substantial changes to the structure. The only work in that area would be to update the facility per code and enhance it with landscaping.

No action—Under the No Action Alternative, TVA would not grant a permanent easement to the Public Park Authority of the Shoals or reallocate TVA land for Development Opportunities. TVA would continue to use and manage the land for Public Recreation and Open Space, Development Opportunities, and Visual Protection. The Public Park Authority could choose to construct the hotel elsewhere at a less optimum location. The 2.2 acres allocated for Development Opportunities and under easement to the Shoals Chamber of Commerce would still be available for the Chamber of Commerce's intended use.

Unaffected Resources

Evaluation of the proposal and surveys of the site have allowed TVA to conclude that certain resources would not be affected by the proposed activities. These resources include: threatened and endangered species, prime farmland, wetlands, stream impacts, floodplains, terrestrial and aquatic habitat. Similarly, the proposal would not contribute to the spread of exotic or invasive species; would not generate significant amounts of solid waste; would not generate or release hazardous wastes, special wastes, toxic substances or radioactive materials; would not generate obnoxious odors; and would not pose a threat to public health. Resources potentially affected by the construction of a hotel are historic structures, recreational facilities within the requested parcel, archeological resources, socioeconomics, noise, and navigation/transportation. These resources that could be potentially affected have been given further consideration in this environmental review.

Affected Environment

The requested land is located immediately downstream of Wilson Dam on the right bank. Portions of the requested land are currently allocated for Public Recreation and Open Space use in the 1996 Muscle Shoals/Wilson Dam Reservations Land Use Plan.

Approximately 2.2 acres of this land are currently allocated for development opportunities, making that part of the land allocation consistent with the proposed hotel usage. Approximately 10.8 acres of the requested land is allocated for Visual Protection because of the Wilson Dam designation as a National Historic Landmark. Surrounding land uses are light commercial and recreational with the Florence Conference Center to the west of the tract, and the Renaissance Tower to the north/northwest of the proposed project site. The southern portion of the property includes a TVA public day use area consisting of a picnic pavilion, restroom facilities, and parking areas. These facilities are located at a scenic vista and provide a public recreation opportunity. The hotel site is situated on a ridge top with steep ravines dropping off on both the east and west side. Just below the developed recreation area, a power line crosses the parcel, which is the last area requested before the topography steeply slopes to the Florence Canal on Pickwick Reservoir. The southern portion of the requested land fronts the Florence Canal which receives heavy use by commercial navigation on the way to Wilson Lock. The prominent visual features of the parcel are topography and mature tree cover, consisting of hackberry, sweet gum, black locust, and a few oaks with blackberry and honeysuckle undergrowth. The linear parcel begins about 200 feet north of the tailwaters of Wilson Dam where sheer rock walls are visible, to the gently sloping ridgetop located near the center of the tract. Infrastructure is visible in the form of a paved road. The hotel site is noticeable from many vantage points and viewing distances; the frequency of views is increased as motorists travel northward over the dam on State Road 133, as fishermen congregate in the tailwaters below, and as visitors to the lock and powerhouse facilities view the breadth of the reservoir and historic structures thereabout. Views are available from the newly constructed Patton Island Bridge, but duration of view is much less than those nearer historic Wilson Dam. Considering the proposed project site holistically, weighting vantage points and viewing distances comparatively, the scenic attractiveness can be classified as common and scenic integrity as low. However, scenic importance is very high, when considering the close proximity to the historic Wilson Dam.

The Wilson Dam is designated as a National Historic Landmark (NHL). NHLs are nationally significant historic places designated by the Secretary of the Interior because they possess exceptional value or quality in illustrating or interpreting the heritage of the United States. Nominations are also accepted from Federal agencies, State Historic Preservation Officers, and private individuals. The following features characterize NHLs:

- National Historic Landmark designation recognizes properties that are important to the entire nation.
- National Historic Landmarks are listed in the National Register of Historic Places.

Wilson Dam was completed in 1925 by the War Department to provide power to federal nitrate plants at Muscle Shoals. It is viewed as significant because it was the first

monumental effort to tame the power of the Tennessee River. The concrete structure is more than 100 feet high and nearly $\frac{3}{4}$ mile in length. One of TVA's cornerstones, it is still the largest in hydroelectric capacity of any of TVA's major dams. Other than Wilson Dam, there are no other nearby historic properties on the National Register that would be visible from the proposed hotel development. Adjacent to the proposed hotel site is the Florence Conference Center, screened from many vantage points by existing vegetative buffers, and the Renaissance Tower, rising above the tree canopy and visible from many vantage points in the immediate area including the powerhouse overlook and roadway at Wilson Dam.

At high levels noise can cause hearing loss, at moderate levels noise can interfere with communication, disrupt sleep, and cause stress, and at low levels noise can cause annoyance. Noise is measured in decibels (dB), a logarithmic unit, so an increase of three dB is just noticeable and an increase of 10 dB is perceived as a doubling of sound level. Because not all noise frequencies are perceptible to the human ear, A-weighted decibels (dBA), which filter out sound in frequencies above and below human hearing, were used for this assessment. The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has established noise guidelines based on an equivalent sound level day/night (DNL) which is a 24-hour average sound level with 10 dB added to hours between 10 p.m. and 7 a.m. since people are more sensitive to nighttime noise. EPA recommends a guideline of DNL less than 55 dBA to protect the health and well-being of the public with an adequate margin of safety. No noise measurements were taken at the proposed site, but background DNL was estimated to be approximately 54 dBA based on the population density of the area (Committee on Hearing, Bioacoustics and Biomechanics, 1977). This would be a daytime average of 55 dBA and a nighttime average of 45 dBA. There are three houses, two apartment buildings and a church adjacent to the proposed site. The closest sensitive noise receptor is an apartment building approximately 100 feet from the proposed site.

Environmental Impacts

A. The Proposed Action

1.) Water Quality

Surface water could be potentially impacted due to increased silt load resulting from runoff during soil disturbing activities. This potential impact would be mitigated by use of standard Best Management Practices for the control of erosion and stormwater runoff.

2.) Recreation

Of the 12 acres requested, approximately three acres contain developed recreation facilities. Development for the hotel would likely complement the existing and proposed recreation uses on nearby TVA property and further enhance recreation development of TVA's day use area. Proposed uses within these three acres are to enhance the existing facilities to include reflective

seating areas, trails, and picnic areas. Therefore, the effects of the proposal on recreation should be beneficial.

3.) Navigation and Transportation

Because of the close proximity to Wilson Lock, no impediments to navigation would be allowed in this area. There would be no major permanent structures within 300 feet of the water's edge. Parking lots, walking trails, and passive recreational facilities would be the only uses in this area. Although there would be an increase in traffic due to the hotel site, the traffic impact would be considered to be insignificant. With the addition of a new bridge just downstream of the hotel site, there is an extensive roadway network that would be adequate to handle this increase. Consideration would be given to turning movements and radii tolerances for designing hotel entrances/exits. Smooth vehicle traffic flow movement would be maintained to/from the hotel site.

4.) Noise

The noise produced by the construction of the hotel would be typical of a light industrial construction project. Construction activities would only occur during daylight hours and is expected to last less than one year. Site preparation and excavation for the hotel would likely require a grader, pan scraper, backhoe, excavator and a roller; noise from this type of equipment would be up to 88 dBA at 50 feet (EPA, 1971). Erection of the hotel would likely require the use of cranes, fork lift, compressor and/or welding machines; noise from this type of equipment would be up to 82 dBA at 50 feet (EPA, 1971). Since noise generally decreases by 6 dB per doubling of distance from the source, noise during the site preparation and excavation phase would be up to 82 dBA at the nearest residence and noise during the erection phase would be up to 76 dBA at the nearest residence. Assuming construction activities occurred ten hours a day, five days a week, this would result in a DNL up to 78 dBA during the site preparation and excavation phase and up to 72 dBA during the erection phase. Since residential structures have usual noise reductions levels of about 20 dBA, this noise is not expected to interfere with speech indoors. Since normal construction practices are limited to daylight hours, construction noise would not disrupt sleep in nearby residences. The construction noise at the nearest residence would exceed the existing noise level as well as EPA's guideline of DNL less than 55 dBA. However, due to the limited duration over which exposure to this noise level would occur, temporary construction activities would not have a significant adverse impact. The operation of the hotel is not expected to significantly change the existing local noise environment.

5.) Socioeconomics

Construction of the proposed hotel is estimated by the applicants to provide up to 1,000 jobs of varying duration. The proposed Hotel would normally employ about 200 full-time employees. Most of these workers would be maintenance workers, housekeeping staff, and other hotel staff, and their jobs would involve the

maintenance and operation of retail services offered by the Hotel. Construction, operation and maintenance of the proposed Hotel would not present a significant effect on the local labor market. Adoption of the Action Alternative would not disproportionately affect low income groups or any minorities.

6.) Archeological Resources

An archaeological survey of the originally estimated 15 acres did not identify any archaeological resources potentially eligible for the National Register of Historic Places. An archeological site (site 1LU654) was identified and TVA determined that it was not potentially eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP). Thus, TVA has determined that the proposed action would have no effect on archaeological sites eligible for the NRHP. TVA invited the Alabama State Historical Preservation Officer (SHPO) to comment on this proposal (see Attachment 5 – TVA Letter to Alabama SHPO). On May 3, 2002, TVA received a letter from the Alabama SHPO stating concurrence with the finding of “no adverse effect” (see Attachment 6 – Alabama SHPO Letter to TVA).

7.) Historic Structures and Visual Resources

The proposed hotel would be on the high point of the knoll overlooking Wilson Dam National Historic Landmark (NHL). The view as seen from Wilson Dam NHL would be of a three-story structure with a hip-roof located on the top of the existing knoll. The trees in the foreground of the proposed hotel are approximately 45 to 60-feet in height and would partially screen the structure. Visual discord would be temporarily evident during the construction phases of the project as construction equipment operated on-site. The landscape character would be altered by the inclusion of built structures into the natural environment. Loss of the existing vegetative buffers between Wilson Dam and the proposed hotel site would substantially change the scenic value and the historic setting and background of Wilson Dam. However, the proposed mitigation would minimize potential impacts to the scenic importance of the area and reduce impacts to the historic setting to insignificant levels. TVA has applied the Criteria of Adverse Effect contained in the regulations implementing the National Historic Preservation Act at 36 CFR Part 800 and has determined that the design of the proposed hotel would not have an adverse effect on the Wilson Dam National Historic Landmark if the commitments as outlined in the Mitigation Measures section are implemented. By letter, the Alabama SHPO concurs with the finding of “no adverse effect.”

B. The No Action Alternative

Under No Action, the setting of Wilson Dam would not change, and there would be no effects to historic properties. Because approximately two acres of the property has already been allocated development opportunities, the communities may propose other developments in the future, possibly leading to the same kind of impacts as discussed for the proposed action. The landscape character would remain as it exists today, and

the visual buffers created by mature hardwood and pine species would protect views from vantage points along the southern shoreline and at Wilson Dam.

Mitigation Measures

The following mitigation measures would be implemented by TVA:

1. TVA will maintain the visual buffer created by the tree cover on the TVA-owned land along the shoreline.
2. TVA will review and approve final site development plans upon verification that the mitigation measures listed below have been implemented by the applicant. The final plans will include external color schemes, external lighting design and specifications, construction BMPs, and planting plans, including any disturbance to existing vegetation located on the southern portion of the parcel. Final site development and planting plans also will be reviewed by the Alabama SHPO.

Mitigation measures to be implemented by the applicant area as follows:

1. The southern 150 feet of existing tree cover on the knoll (as measured from the centerline of the access roadway to the lock northward to the knoll) and the trees located on the east side of the proposed hotel will be retained and this visual buffer will be enhanced by planting of additional trees of similar growth habit and density.
2. The architectural color scheme shall be visually compatible with natural background colors and surrounding historic architectural elements. This color scheme also applies to signage, which shall not extend above the existing tree line or any tree line established post-construction.
3. Height of the new hotel and associated structures will not exceed three stories above the ground surface of the knoll.
4. A visual buffer will be maintained in the area between the TVA-owned land along the shoreline and the power line right-of-way on the parcel.
5. Lighting styles with direct cut off optics will be used to minimize light impacts at nearby Historic Wilson Dam.
6. Best Management Practices (BMPs) for construction activities will include silt fences backed by staked straw bales around the entire perimeter of the site and will be in place before the commencement of any soil disturbing activities. BMPs will be strictly maintained throughout construction to prevent soils from being washed directly into the canal.
7. The portion of the land that is adjacent to the canal will not have any permanent structures within 300 feet of the water's edge. Parking lots, walking trails, and passive recreational facilities will be the only uses in this area.
8. Turning movements and radii tolerances shall be so designed that vehicle traffic flow movement maintained to/from the hotel site is smooth.

Preferred Alternative

Development of a hotel adjacent to the Renaissance Tower and Florence Conference Center would have insignificant effects on environmental resources. The effect of the hotel project on Wilson Dam has been taken into account, and TVA has concluded that the project would have no adverse effects on Wilson Dam or other historic properties. TVA's preferred alternative is the action alternative which is to reallocate the designation of 10.8 of these acres from Visual Protection, 2.0 acres from Development Opportunities, and 2.8 acres from Public Recreation and Open Space to Developed Recreation and to grant a permanent easement to the Public Park Authority of the Shoals Region for 12 acres of the Wilson Dam Reservation Land.

References

Committee on Hearing, Bioacoustics and Biomechanics. 1977. Guidelines for Preparing Environmental Impact Statements on Noise. Report of Working Group 69 on Evaluation of Environmental Impact of Noise. National Academy of Sciences, Washington, DC.

Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). 1971. Noise from Construction Equipment and Operation, Building Equipment, and Home Appliances. U.S. EPA, NTID300.1, 1971.

Agencies and Persons Consulted

Northwest Alabama Council of Local Governments
State of Alabama

Department of Conservation and Natural Resources

Department of Environmental Management

Alabama Historical Commission (Alabama State Historic Preservation Office)

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Nashville District

U. S. Department of Interior

Office of Environmental Policy and Compliance

Fish and Wildlife Service

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

List of Preparers

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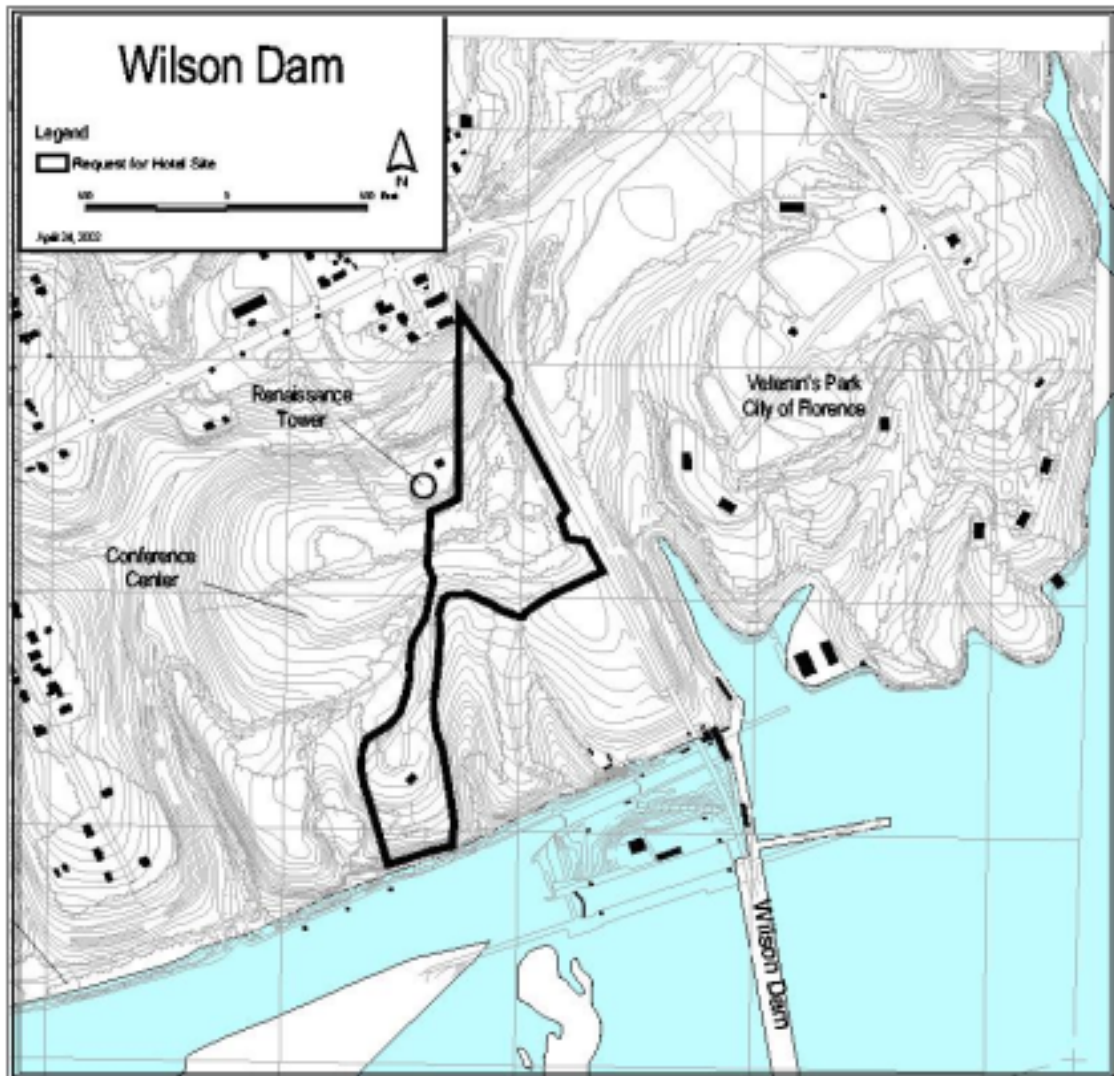
Cherie Minghini, Civil Engineer, TVA Highways and Roads Technical Specialist -)

George Peck, Biologist, TVA Aquatic Ecology Technical Specialist

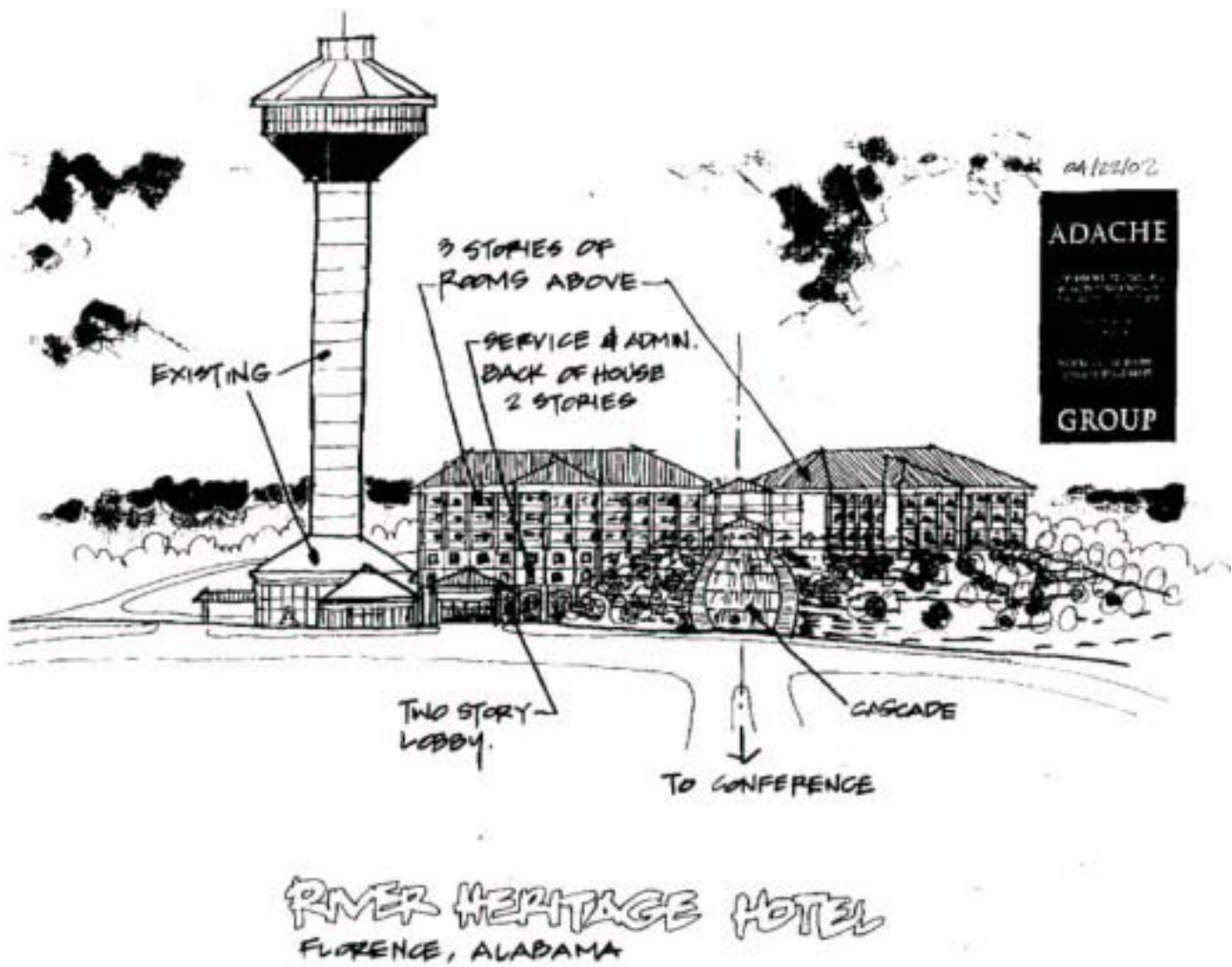
Ralph M. Perhac, Economist, TVA Socioeconomics Technical Specialist

Jon Riley, Landscape Architect, TVA Visual Resources Technical Specialist
Helen G. Rucker, Senior NEPA Specialist, TVA NEPA Project Manager
Barry Stalcup, Aquatic Biologist, TVA Technical Specialist for Surface water, Wetlands,
Threatened and Endangered Species,
Charles Tichy, (Technical Specialist – Historic Properties)
Cassandra L. Wylie, Environmental Modeler (Technical Specialist - Noise)
Richard Yarnell, (Technical Specialist – Archaeology)

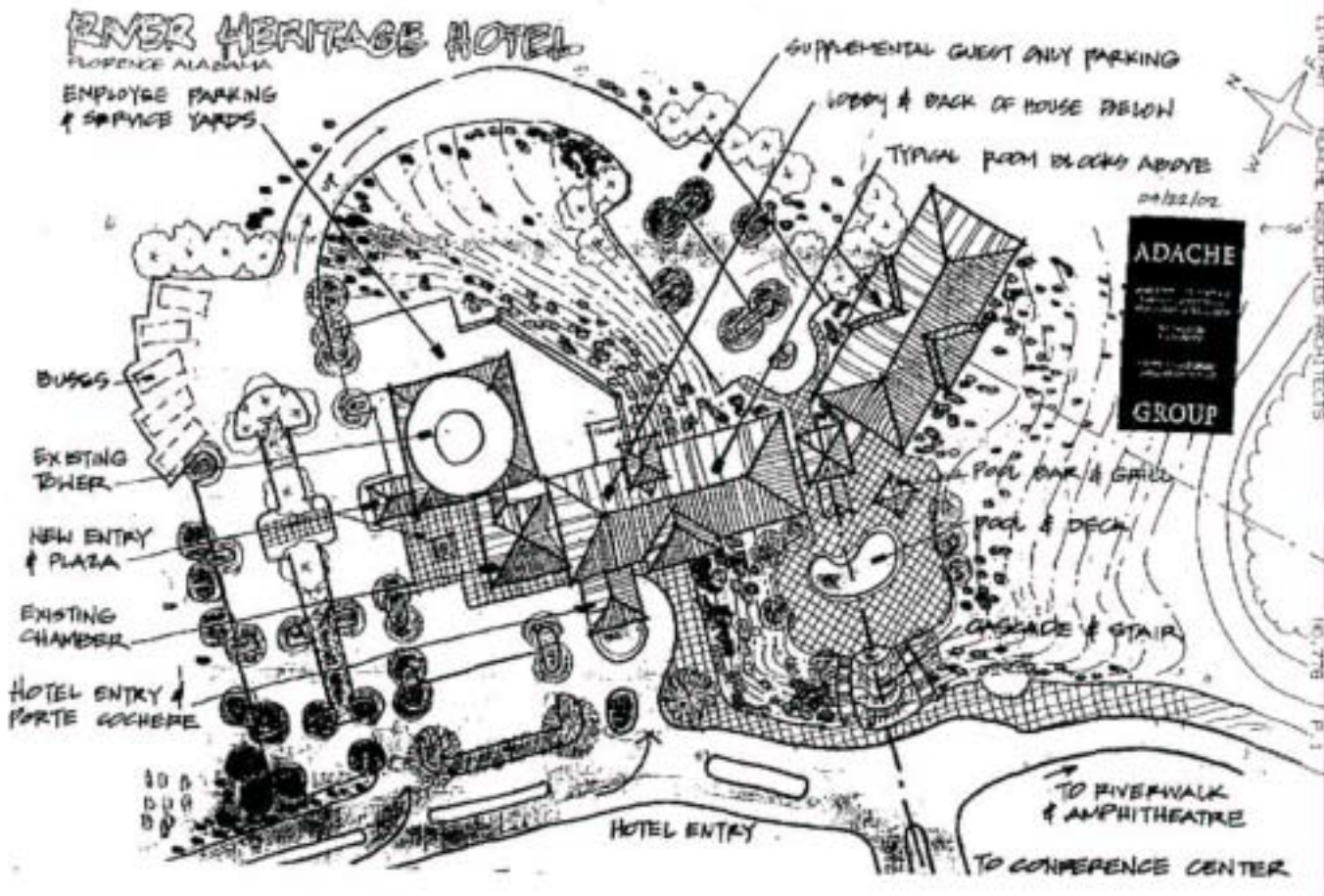
Attachment 1 – Location Map



Attachment 2 – Architectural Rendition of Hotel Structure Profile - “Preliminary Concept”



Attachment 3 – Architectural Rendition of Hotel Site Plan – “Preliminary Concept”



Attachment 4 - February 11, 2002 letter to agencies

February 11, 2002

Dear: **See Attached List**

INTERGOVERNMENTAL REVIEW - PROPOSED COMMERCIAL AND
RECREATIONAL DEVELOPMENTS ON THE TENNESSEE RIVER, MUSCLE SHOALS
AND WILSON DAM RESERVATIONS, COLBERT AND LAUDERDALE COUNTIES,
ALABAMA

Local governments in the Shoals area of northwestern Alabama (Colbert County, city of Florence, Lauderdale County, city of Muscle Shoals, city of Sheffield, and city of Tusculumbia) have requested that TVA make available about 700 acres of TVA property for their use in constructing a hotel, conference center, and golf course development. The project would be funded by the Retirement System of Alabama, a state agency, and the local governments. The enclosures provide additional information about the proposed project, including maps of the land requested.

TVA will prepare an environmental review on the impacts of the hotel and golf course proposals. We would appreciate your comments on the issues that need to be addressed prior to a decision on this application. Your comments are welcome at any time, but would be most helpful if received by March 8, 2002.

Should you have any questions, please contact Harold M. Draper at (865) 632-6889, or hmdraper@tva.gov.

Sincerely,

Original signed by

Jon M. Loney, Manager
NEPA Administration
Environmental Policy and Planning

HMD:BL

Enclosures

cc: H. G. Rucker, SB 1H-M
J. W. Shipp, Jr., MR 2T-C
C. V. Ward, NRB BA-N
Files, EP&P, CST 17B-C

Muscle Shoals Golf Course interagency

The attached letter was sent to the following list of names on February 11, 2002.

Mr. Riley Boykin Smith, Commissioner
Department of Conservation and Natural Resources
64 North Union Street
Montgomery, Alabama 36130

Mr. James W. Warr, Director
Department of Environmental Management
Post Office Box 301463
Montgomery, Alabama 36130-1463

Ms. Elizabeth Brown, Acting Executive Director
Alabama Historical Commission
468 Perry Street
Montgomery, Alabama 36130-0900

Mr. Robb Hurt
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
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Mr. Larry E. Goldman
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Daphne, Alabama 36526

U.S. Department of the Interior
Office of the Secretary
Office of Environmental Policy and Compliance
1849 C Street, NW, Room 2340
Washington, DC 20240

Lieutenant Colonel Steven W. Gay
District Engineer
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
Post Office Box 1070
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Mr. Richard E. Holst
Northwest Alabama Council of Local Governments
Post Office Box 2603
Muscle Shoals, Alabama 35662

Mr. Michael G. Gilbert
Alabama Indian Affairs Commission
770 South McDonough Street
Montgomery, Alabama 36104

Mr. Heinz J. Mueller
Chief, Office of Environmental Assessment
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Region 4
Atlanta Federal Center
61 Forsyth Street, SW
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Mr. Ron Gatlin, Chief
Regulatory Branch
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
Nashville District
3701 Bell Road
Nashville, Tennessee 37214-2660

Attachment 5 – TVA Letter to Alabama SHPO

April 29, 2002

Ms. Stacey Hathorn
Alabama Historical Commission
468 South Perry Street
Montgomery, Alabama 36130-0900

RE: Public Park Authority of the Shoals Proposal to Develop a 15.6 Acre River Heritage Hotel Site, on the Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA) Muscle Shoals Reservation, Lauderdale County, Addendum to *Cultural Resources Survey for the Muscle Shoals Reservation, Lauderdale and Colbert Counties, Alabama*

Dear Ms. Hathorn:

The former RSA proposal to develop the Shoals area convention center and golf course on TVA's Muscle Shoals Reservation, Colbert and Lauderdale Counties, Alabama has been formally withdrawn by the applicants and is no longer a proposed TVA undertaking. Subsequently, the Public Park Authority of the Shoals submitted a new proposal in Lauderdale County for the construction of the River Heritage resort hotel on approximately 15 acres of the Muscle Shoals Reservation (See Figure 1 of enclosed report). The land is located adjacent to the Renaissance Tower, between the Florence Conference Center and Cox Creek Parkway at Tennessee River Mile 259.2R. TVA has determined this to be a newly proposed undertaking and per a verbal agreement with Dr. Tom Maher (April 24, 2002), we are submitting an addendum to the report titled *Cultural Resources Survey for the Muscle Shoals Reservation, Lauderdale and Colbert Counties, Alabama* to fulfill TVA's Section 106 obligations. The archaeological portion of the survey was conducted by TRC and the historic structures review was conducted by Charles Tichy, Historic Architect TVA.

Pursuant to the requirements of Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act and its implementing regulations at 36 CFR Part 800, TVA is consulting with your office regarding the potential of the proposed undertaking to affect historic properties. As to the Wilson Dam National Historic Landmark (NHL), TVA has determined that the proposed undertaking will not have an adverse effect on the dam with implementation of the attached conditions. Under 36 C.F.R. § 800.5(c)(1), TVA seeks your concurrence regarding the no adverse effect determination for Wilson Dam NHL. The attached enclosures provide the

documentation for TVA's "no adverse effect" determination in accordance with 36 C.F.R. § 800.11(e).

TRC Garrow conducted a Phase I archaeological survey over approximately 10 acres of TVA land which was not investigated in the previous survey. No additional archaeological sites were identified. Site 1LU654 was identified in the previous survey and TVA determined that it was not potentially eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP). Therefore, TVA has determined that there are no NRHP eligible archaeological sites present within the area of potential effect of the proposed 15 acre hotel site. Under 36 C.F.R. § 800.4(d)(1), TVA is seeking your concurrence with this determination and the attached survey report provides the documentation for TVA's finding of "no historic properties affected" in accordance with 36 C.F.R. § 800.11(d).

If you have questions concerning this action please contact Charles Tichy, TVA Historic Architect, at (865) 632-1581 regarding assessment of effects to historic structures, or Richard Yarnell at (865) 632- 1584 for assessment of effects to archaeological resources.

Sincerely,

J. Bennett Graham
Manager and Senior Archaeologist,
Cultural Resources

Enclosures

Cc: Dr. Thomas O. Maher
Alabama Historical Commission
468 South Perry Street
Montgomery, Alabama 36130-0900

WILSON DAM - NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARK

Determination of Effect

Proposed North Bluff Hotel

The proposed hotel will be on the high point of the knoll overlooking Wilson Dam NHL, as shown in the enclosed documentation. The view as seen from Wilson Dam NHL will be a three-story structure with a hip-roof located on the top of the knoll, and which is estimated to be approximately 60-feet in height. The trees in the foreground of the proposed hotel are approximately 45 to 60-feet in height and will partially screen the structure.

The attached enclosures show the location of the proposed hotel and the view from different directions. TVA concludes that the design of the proposed hotel would not have an adverse effect on the Wilson Dam National Historic Landmark if the following conditions are implemented:

- Retain the southern 1000 feet of existing tree cover on the knoll.
- Plant additional trees along the south facade of the proposed structure.
- Use of non-obtrusive colors for blending with the tree line.
- Limit the height of the structure to three stories above the knoll.
- Tree cover along the shoreline will be retained. TVA will not convey land along the shoreline, therefore existing tree cover will be maintained.

Listing of Enclosures

Perspective Sketch: The view at the proposed hotel as seen from Wilson Dam NHL (*i.e.*, from the west-southwest) will be a three-story structure, estimated to be approximately 60-feet in height, with a hip-roof located on the top of the knoll. . The hotel descends down the back side of the knoll to the base of the Renaissance Tower. The view from the west and north is a six-story element and does not visually affect Wilson Dam NHL, which is to the south.

Site Plan A: Showing the proposed hotel structure location. Note relation to existing Renaissance Tower and Conference Center.

Site Plan B: Showing the proposed hotel structure location on a larger site area. Note relation to existing Renaissance Tower, Conference Center and Wilson Locks. The two major wings of the proposed hotel are highlighted in yellow.

Regional Site Plan: Showing proposed (revised) TVA tract, outlined in red, requested for the hotel. The hotel will be sited on the knoll to the north portion of the tract. The heavy black line in the lower left, crossing the river channels and islands, represents the newly constructed Patton Island Bridge.

USGS Map Florence, ALA.: Partial copy showing Wilson Dam NHL (yellow highlight). Note: new highway alignment going north from the Dam bridge is not shown on this map. See **Aerial Photograph** for this new highway alignment.

Aerial Photograph: Copy at approximate scale 1:6000. Dated 3-23-2000. Existing Conference Center and Renaissance Tower highlighted in yellow. Note new highway alignment going north from Dam bridge.

Panorama A: View looking north from Wilson Dam Powerhouse visitor overlook.

Panorama B: Same view as **Panorama A** using a 105mm 'zoom' lens. The proposed hotel will be in front (south) of the Tower approximately 60-feet in height. The trees in the foreground are approximately 45 to 60-feet in height and will partially screen the structure. It is expected that portions of the top of the roof line will probably show above the tree line.

Photo-Copy 1: View looking north from Wilson Dam visitor overlook at the upstream side of the Dam, using a 'zoom' lens.

Photo-Copy 2: View looking north from Wilson Dam Lock. The proposed hotel will be at the top of the knoll just in front (south) of the Tower.

Panorama C: View from north end of bridge (crossing of Dam).

Panorama D: View looking west from highway east embankment. Road cut approximately 37 feet below elevation of top of knoll.

Photo-Copy 3: View looking north-east from the south end of the newly constructed Patton Island Bridge.

Photo-Copy 4: Same view as **Photo-Copy 3** using a 105mm 'zoom' lens. The proposed hotel will be to the right (south) of the Tower. Shown just left of the Tower is the one-story Conference Center. Tree cover to a large extent screens this building from the Wilson Dam Powerhouse visitor overlook.

Charles Tichy, Historic Architect
Tennessee Valley Authority, Cultural Resources
April 2002

Attachment 6 –Letter from Alabama SHPO



STATE OF ALABAMA
ALABAMA HISTORICAL COMMISSION
468 SOUTH PERRY STREET
MONTGOMERY, ALABAMA 36130-0900

LEE H. WARNER
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

May 3, 2002

TEL: 334-242-3184
FAX: 334-240-3477

J. Bennett Graham
Manager and Senior Archaeologist
Cultural Resources
TVA
P.O. Box 1589
Norris, TN 37828-1589

Re: AHC 2002-0555
Public Park Authority of the Shoals Proposal to Develop a 15.6-Acre
River Heritage Hotel Site, on the Tennessee Valley Authority Muscle Shoals
Reservation, Lauderdale County, Alabama.

Dear Dr. Graham,

The Alabama Historical Commission has reviewed your letter and enclosures dated April 30 and received May 1, 2002. As per the phone conversation between Richard Yarnell of your office and Tom Maher of the AHC, we accept this as an addendum to the report *Cultural Resources Survey for the Muscle Shoals Reservation, Lauderdale and Colbert Counties, Alabama* by TRC. Also during that telephone conversation it was agreed that the 30-day review period would begin anew upon that submission (i.e. the clock restarts at May 1, 2002). We have, however, immediately reviewed the information submitted for the new hotel site on Muscle Shoals reservation.

We concur that this hotel project will have no adverse effect on the Wilson Dam National Historic Landmark, or any other National Register eligible historic structures or sites. We agree that this transfer of land and construction of the River Heritage Hotel can take place as long as it is restricted to the 15.6 acre documented in this addendum and we continue to be consulted in the design for the hotel and surrounding landscape.

We continue to review the large report by TRC on the cultural resources on the Muscle Shoals reservation. Although the golf course project that stimulated this report has been altered, we see this report as covering the section 110 (NHPA) responsibilities of TVA. We will have comments to you on or before June 1, 2002. If you have any question contact Stacey Hathorn or Tom Maher of this office.

Yours truly,

Elizabeth Ann Brown
Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer